

# Christ crowned with thorns



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Christ Crowned with Thorns” by Matthias Stom A piece of art that I could lived with is “ Christ Crowned with Thorns” by Matthias Stom. This piece is not just a beautiful painting, but a work of art with deep meaning. The contrast between the usage of dark and light in the painting is striking. I love “ Christ Crowned with Thorns”. In fact this is my favorite painting.

Matthias Stom, a Dutch painter, created “ Christ Crowned with Thorns” after becoming a Caravaggisti in Rome (Norton Simon Museum). “ Christ Crowned with Thorns” depicts the torture of Jesus Christ at night illuminated by one lonely candle. The use of a lone candle shows an intimacy between the torturers and Christ. Because the Jews were the one who crowned Jesus with thorns, this event must have taken place after Pilate turned Him over to the Jews.

The realism in this painting makes me feel great compassion for the Christ shown. Unlike other paintings, Stom used his paintbrush smoothly. “ Christ Crowned with Thorns” can be recognized as a painting, but not with harsh visible strokes. Stom obviously studied humans closely. The Christs muscles, ribcage, and face are realistically human. The crown upon the Christs head is delicately placed, blending into the background of darkness. If one word was used to describe this work of art, it would be seamless. The whole painting flows into a seamless scene of Christ and his crown of thorns.

“ Christ Crowned with Thorns” does portray a symbolic message. The light, which is a candle, closest to the Christ represents Jesus light to Christians. A light to show the way toward Christianity and heaven. The darkness represents individuals lost doomed to end up in hell. The men around Jesus represent skeptics of Christianity, even after hearing Jesus message or seeing Jesus light. The black and white represent the chasm between heaven

and hell. Heaven and hell are complete opposites, just like light and darkness.

Since I am a Christian, this painting makes me feel hope. This painting reminds me of the sacrifice Jesus made for sinners. I also feel a great compassion for the Christ in the picture. It makes the crucifixion of Jesus more real to me, not just an abstract idea. I feel that for Matthias Stom to paint this picture, he must have been a Christian as well. This painting had to be inspired by more than being a Caravaggisti.

Matthias Stoms “ Christ Crowned with Thorns” fits into history as a painting influenced by Caravaggio. The naturalism, minute observation of detail mixed with dramatic light and shadow, created by Caravaggio is apparent in this painting. Other paintings, including Caravaggios, dealing with Christ from this period create the first artworks from the Baroque period. The Church, Catholic and Protestant, commissioned artists to fill their churches. Working for the Church was more lucrative, than working for individuals. The difference between Matthias Stom and Caravaggio versus other artists of the time was the realism. Before cherubs, God, Jesus, and other figures were bloated, elongated, or exaggerated. The realism was what defined Matthias Stom and Caravaggio from other artists of the period.

“ Christ Crowned with Thorns” is an inspirational painting. I could live with this painting on my wall (if I was a billionaire). My adoration has not waned since observing the picture. This smooth flowing picture is how I see the crucifixion now.

#### Reference

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